

New Hampshire Special Education Onsite Evaluation Report

SAU #54

Dr. Raymond Yeagley, Superintendent

Evaluation Conducted on: January 22-23, 1997

Team Members:

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Special Education

(Commendations, Citations, and Suggestions for each school)

Note: *It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The district is not mandated to implement them.*

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SAU # 54

I. INTRODUCTION:

A New Hampshire Special Education On-Site Evaluation was conducted at SAU #54 comprised of the following schools: East Rochester Elementary, Maple Street, McCelland, Allen School, Chamberlain Elementary, School Street School and the Annex, Rochester Middle School, Spaulding High School and Gonic School. The on-site team met on January 22-23, 1997 in order to review the status of Special Education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the teaching certifications of Special Education Staff, analysis of SPEDIS data and random inspection of student records. Interviews were held with the Special Education Director, building principals, regular and special education teachers and related service personnel, as time and availability permitted. Throughout the visit the team had full cooperation from the school personnel and this helpfulness was greatly appreciated.

The report which you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of your on-site team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the NH State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no exceptions to the Standards found in that particular area.

II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE:

The visiting team was favorably impressed with the effort that has been put forth by the staff in SAU#54 to address the citations noted in previous monitoring visits. It was the consensus of the team that much progress has been made in addressing the orders of compliance listed in the Commissioner of Education's correspondence dated July 1995. Upon review of student records, the visiting team found that the Rochester School District has instituted the use of the standard forms in each of the schools and these documents are being consistently utilized by all staff. As a result, the team noted a significant improvement in paperwork compliance and documentation of the special education process from referral to identification to placement. In addition, the team noted that there is now a systematic and organized approach to maintaining student records. This has helped to ensure that essential information regarding adherence to timelines, writing of evaluation summary reports and monitoring the progress of IEP goals and objectives is being documented more consistently. Overall, the SAU is working hard to make certain that all staff have the appropriate credentials and endorsements, and there has been improvement made in ensuring that IEP and placement teams have consistent and appropriate composition. The team also determined that there has been improvement in formalized inservice training for staff in the areas of policy, procedure, clarification of the special education process, and making adaptations/ modifications for disabled students in the regular education setting. It should, however, be noted that the team came to the agreement that although all of the above mentioned areas have shown improvement, they will warrant continued attention as these issues have not been fully resolved. I.E.P.'s, as reviewed by the team, varied in quality and content depending upon the individuals who wrote them; and for the most part, the documents had all of the required components as outlined in the NH State Standards for the

Education of Students with Disabilities. The team did note the need for continued training in the writing of strong, measurable and comprehensive I.E.P.'s. The issue of the provision of education in the least restrictive environment was discussed by the team, specifically at the high school, where concerns have been raised regarding equal opportunity to earn a high school diploma, and aspects of the tracked program which does not always allow all students to earn credits toward a high school diploma. The visiting team came to the consensus that this too is an area that warrants continued attention. Based on interviews with staff and visits to each of the schools, the on-site team determined that adequate materials, supplies and equipment are not always available in order to provide appropriate instruction for special needs students. For this reason it is sometimes difficult to implement IEP's and provide programming to meet the individual learning needs of disabled students.

In general, it was the consensus of the visiting team that SAU#54 has achieved considerable success in addressing issues of noncompliance documented in previous monitoring visits. The staff and administration are recognized for their dedication and the effort that has been put forth to improve programming for disabled students.

III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:

In a variety of ways it is clear that the staff in SAU#54 have put forth much effort to implement new policies, practices and standardized forms to address the orders of compliance from the Commissioner of Education. The special education programs and services currently available in SAU#54 appear to be meeting the needs of educationally disabled students and the majority of children receive their programs within the least restrictive environment. To ensure the continued compliance with the NH Standards for the Education of Students with Disabilities, it will be essential that the newly developed policies and procedures and standardized forms remain intact and consistently implemented, and that the SAU continue to address areas of noncompliance noted in the report that follows. In identifying issues of significance, the team determined that there are a few areas that still warrant attention and they are listed as follows:

- There is a need for continued inservice training, professional growth opportunities and technical assistance for all staff in the areas of classroom modifications, adapting curricula, writing of strong and measurable IEP'S.
- There is a need for continued monitoring of oversights and omissions in special education paperwork compliance and refinement in existing special education practices.
- There is a need to review the effectiveness and success of programming and services currently being offered to EH students enrolled in the alternative program at Spaulding High School.
- There is a need for continued discussion and further plans of action to deal with diploma/certificate of attendance issues, and earning of High School credits.
- Ensure the provision of adequate supplies, materials, and equipment to implement I.E.P.'s.

In summary, SAU#54 has made significant gains in program improvements and addressing areas of noncompliance documented in previous on-site visits. Throughout the SAU there is a commitment on the part of staff to provide quality programming to all students and the visiting team would like to recognize and reinforce continuation of corrective actions and support the goals that each building is working towards.

SAU-WIDE - ROCHESTER DISTRICT

Program(s) Visited: ALL

COMMENDATIONS:

- The Special Education Director has worked hard to develop a comprehensive manual with well written policies and procedures.

CITATIONS:

CFR 300.348 Development of IEP for Students Referred to or Placed in Private Non-District
Ed # 1109.06(a-h) Program.
Ed # 1109.07

SAU #54 needs to develop specific policy and procedures for students placed in non-district programs as outlined in ED 1109.06 & 07.

Ed # 1115.05 Procedure for Home-Based Programming in Excess of 45 Days in a Calendar Year.

The self-study submitted refers to special ed. manual PSIX6 1-2, the reader could find no policy related to procedures for home-based programming. Page IX 6 1-2.

Ed # 1117.03(a-c) Responsibility of the Local Education Agency
Ed # 1119.02(b)
CFR 300.304

The SAU needs to document that students enrolled in the EH Middle and High School programs have the opportunity for equitable participation in all aspects of the school's curriculum and that students have equal access to course offerings outlined in the minimum state standards. In addition, further documentation is needed indicating that students in this program have interactions with students of similar age and/or development.

Ed # 1121.01/03 Surrogate Parent
Ed # 1121.04/05

In the SAU Policy/Procedures Manual, there needs to be included a policy outlining the process for appointment of a surrogate parent.

Suggestions:

EAST ROCHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Team Members: Mary Ellen Ormand

Program(s) Visited: Resource Room Program

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 567225 2) 567244 3) 552162

COMMENDATIONS:

- Pre-referral strategies at East Rochester Elementary are outstanding.
- Collaboration and cooperation between regular education and special education is evident.
- The Building Principals involvement in special education is evident.
- Teachers are recognized for their dedication and desire to help all children.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1107.02(b) 1 file: No referral

Ed # 1107.03(a) 1 file: No LD certified individual at evaluation meeting for suspected LD code.

Ed # 1107.07(c) 1 file: No teacher certified in suspected area present at evaluation meeting.

Ed # 1107.08(d) 1 file: No written report signed by team

Ed # 1107.08(d) 1 file: Parts 1-g missing

Suggestions:

MAPLE STREET SCHOOL

Team Members: Becky Eastman

Program(s) Visited: Resource Room (Grades 1-3)

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 567280 2) 567199 3) 558525

COMMENDATIONS:

- Student files are well organized.
- New special education forms are used consistently and have helped in making sure paperwork is in compliance
- At Maple Street School, staff hold endorsements in several areas (Elementary Ed, LD, ED, MR, and general special education)
- Monitoring of IEP goals and objectives are documented through narratives and are very comprehensive documents.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1111.01 1 file: Extended school year process was not completed by 4/30.

Suggestions:

McCLELLAND SCHOOL

Team Members: Liza Hewitt, Lois Beach

Program(s) Visited: All Programs at McClelland

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 558566 2) 561936 3) 555294

COMMENDATIONS:

- The visiting team was made to feel welcome and the McClelland staff were open and honest.
- Staff at McClelland appreciate the principal's involvement.
- Staff appreciate opportunities for professional development.
- Staff are committed to quality services for all students.
- Inclusion model is being implemented effectively.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1107.02(b) 1 file: Had no record of referral

Ed # 1107.06 1 file: Missing a written three-year evaluation summary report

Ed # 1107.08(d) 1 file: Missing evidence of vision/hearing testing

Ed # 1109.01(c)&(d) 2 files: IEP's had no evidence of extent of participation in regular ed. classes and expectations of regular class participation.

Ed # 1109.01(I) 2 files: Had no evidence of short-term evaluation criteria on IEP's.

Ed # 1109.03(a-d) 1 file: Lacked documentation that IEP team was appropriately composed

Ed # 1109.11 2 files: Had no evidence of the monitoring of IEP goals and objectives

Ed # 1111.01 1 file: Had no evidence that extended school year program was considered

Ed # 1115.03 1 file: Unable to determine if placement team had appropriate composition

Suggestions:

ALLEN SCHOOL

Team Members: Gwen Ross

Program(s) Visited: 1) Allen - Primary Transitional Program
2) Intermediate ED/LD

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 549256 2) 545154 3) 544994

COMMENDATIONS:

- Self-contained programs are well staffed, colorful, with stimulating working activities.
- Primary Transition Program has successful inclusion, multi-age model and good collaboration between regular and special educators.
- There are high academic expectations for all students.
- Dedicated staff that assume responsibility for all children and are tenacious in ensuring each child succeeds.
- Principal is involved and knowledgeable of the special education process.
- There has been much improvement in paperwork compliance since the previous on-site visit.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1107.03(a) 1 file: No certified teacher of disability on evaluation team

Ed # 1107.05(b) 1 file: Evaluation was not completed within 45 days - no extension signed

Ed # 1107.07(c) 1 file: No teacher certified in suspected disability area on evaluation team

Ed # 1115.03 1 file: No special education teacher present at placement team meeting

Ed # 1109.01 1 file: IEP had no present level of performance listed

Ed # 1109.03(a-d) 1 file: No evidence of special education teacher present at IEP meeting

Ed # 1109.04(a) 1 file: Parent notice was less than 10 days

Ed # 1109.11 1 file: Lacked evidence of regular monitoring of IEP progress (speech & language component)

Ed # 1111.01 1 file: Extended school year was not considered by 4/30.

ALLEN SCHOOL

Suggestions:

- Look for ways to provide more direct service vs. paperwork/meetings for specialists.
- Work on transition Preschool - Allen - Middle School.
- Work to encourage parent involvement in the transition process.
- For children receiving support services in classrooms by program aides, provide for consistent consultation between the classroom teacher and the Resource Room teacher.
- Take a critical look at the Resource Room teacher's caseload and how it is impacting the delivery of services to students.

CHAMBERLAIN SCHOOL

Team Members

Carolyn Woodman

Program(s) Visited:

Maximum Resource Room

**SPEDIS # OF FILES
REVIEWED:**

1) 567194

2) 558576

3) 554995

COMMENDATIONS:**CITATIONS:**

Ed # 1107.02(b,d) 3 files: Lacked evidence of written notification to parent

Ed # 1107.05 2 files: Had no signed extension

Ed # 1107.07(c) 1 file: Had no certified LD teacher at re-evaluation meeting

Ed # 1107.08(a) 1 file: Had no evidence that regular education teacher was present

Ed # 1129.05 1 file: ASP was not signed

Ed # 1115.06 1 file: LEA representative was not present at placement team meeting

Suggestions:

ROCHESTER ANNEX, SCHOOL STREET SCHOOL

Team Members: Noel Sullivan, Janina Wojtkun

Program(s) Visited: 1) East Rochester Annex
2) School Street School

SPEDIS # OF FILES
REVIEWED: 1) 549507 2) 561988

COMMENDATIONS:

East Rochester Annex:

- There is a strong sense of cooperation and collaboration among all staff members.
- There are shared responsibilities among all staff.
- Staff are dedicated and child centered.

School Street School:

- Resource teacher works very hard to maintain records, coordinate all meetings and consultations with staff.
- Student records are well organized and comprehensive.

CITATIONS:

None

Suggestions:

- The area in which the special educator provides services needs to be improved(i.e. working on the Attic landing with no heat is not a conducive or appropriate teaching/learning environment).

ROCHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Team Members: George Hails, Dr. Dewayne Howell

Program(s) Visited: 1) Middle School Special Ed (Grades 6,7,8)

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 544930 2) 549454 3)

COMMENDATIONS:

- Use of new forms has helped with paperwork compliance.
- Staff are hard working, dedicated and open to staff development opportunities.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1107.02(b,d) 2 files: Did not have written notice

Ed # 1107.05(k) 1 file: Evaluation was not completed in 45 days, no signed extension in student record

Ed # 1123.05 2 files: No evidence of "Notification of Parental Rights"

Ed # 1115.03 1 file: No evidence of LEA and regular education teacher on placement team

Ed # 1109.03(a-d) 2 files: Lacked evidence of appropriate team composition at IEP development meeting

Ed # 1109.04(a) 2 files: No documentation of written notice given to parent prior to IEP meeting

Suggestions:

GONIC SCHOOL

Team Members: Theodore M. Prizio

Program(s) Visited: Resource Room

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 567233 2) 533227 3) 552173

COMMENDATIONS:

- Atmosphere within the school is warm, colorful, and welcome.
- Principal is actively involved in all aspects of the program.
- Student records are well organized with only minor oversights in paperwork compliance.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1107.07(c) 1 file: Teacher at See/PT meeting was not certified in L.D.

Ed # 1107.08(a) 1 file: No regular education teacher on SEE/PT evaluation team

Ed # 1115.03 1 file: Placement team composition was not appropriate

Ed # 1107.08(e) 1 file: Team members not at evaluation meeting team because Principal met with parent after school hours.

Ed # 1123.05 1 file: Lacked documentation of notification of parental rights

Ed # 1115.03 1 file: Lacked documentation of appropriate placement team membership

Suggestions:

SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL

Team Members: Nate Norris, Santina Thibodeau, Carole Hunt

Program(s) Visited: All

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED:

1) 523206	2) 509768	3) 506030
4) 544999	5) 528939	

COMMENDATIONS:

- The Pupil / IEP progress reports that are filed quarterly, or in some cases weekly or bi-weekly, are excellent an communication tool between school and parents. General education teachers of content classes provide detailed information on student progress, demonstrate high levels of knowledge of individual student programs, appropriate program modifications and adaptations and demonstrate professional concern for individual students and their needs.
- There is an apparent high level of staff energy, professionalism and commitment to “success for all students”.
- Special education staff and general education staff collaborate and cooperate well in IEP development, implementation, progress recording and home school communication. These individuals are very invested in helping students to succeed and achieve high standards.

CITATIONS:

Ed # 1107.03(a)(I) 1 file: Did not provide evidence that the evaluation team was multi-disciplinary.
1 file: Only evidence of academic performance evaluation was provided.

Ed # 1107.05(a)(k) 1 file: Did not provide evidence of qualified examiner and data in the area of intellectual functioning.
1 file: Evaluation was not completed within 45 days, no wavier signed.

Ed # 1107.06 2 files: Did not include an appropriate written SEE/PT evaluation summary report

Ed # 1107.07(c) 1 file: Lacked evidence that the SEE/PT evaluation team included a L.E.A. representative other than the teacher.

Ed # 1107.08(a,c,d) 3 files: Did not provide evidence that a regular education teacher was included on the team or that a classroom observation was conducted or that a written summary report was prepared.

Ed # 1109.01 (I) 1 file: Lacked transition planning elements of IEP

<u>Ed # 1102.35 (a-m)</u>	1 file: Lacked transition planning elements of IEP
<u>Ed # 1104.03(c)</u>	1 file: Lacked evidence that student and other agencies were invited or consulted regarding transition planning elements of IEP
<u>Ed # 1109.11</u>	3 files: Lacked evidence of regular and systematic monitoring of the IEP
<u>Ed # 1115.03</u>	1 file: Lacked evidence that a placement team member was certified in L.D.

Suggestions:

- Review materials and acquisition procedures to ensure that supplementary supplies, materials, and equipment, especially computer technology and software, are equally available across all programs, including special education.

ADDENDUM

JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM

SAU #54

Student File Review

Case Study Document

Reimbursement Claim Form

Case Study Addendum Form

<p>ADDENDUM</p> <p>JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</p>
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SAU #54

At the time of the On-Site Visitation, the team did not review student records that qualified under the James O' Consent Decree.